

## Message From The Director

### Special Update

DVR Staff and Partners:

We are pleased to update you on the Governor's proposed budget for the 2007-2009 biennium. The Governor's budget fully supports and matches all available federal funds for the VR program.

Additionally, the Governor's budget provides \$1.578 million for the Mental Health Division for Clubhouse funding – to replace what DVR has provided up until now for infrastructure support. We look forward to continuing to partner with Clubhouses as they develop the capacity to provide employment services for our mutual customers.

As you read recent letters from DSHS Secretary Robin Arnold-Williams and the December 20 Inside DSHS update, please be aware of a misstatement related to funding to 'add capacity for supported employment through DVR'. The Governor's proposed budget does not provide additional funding for supported employment services. However, by transitioning responsibility for Clubhouse support from DVR to the Mental Health Division, the Governor's proposed budget will increase our capacity to support individuals in finding employment through DVR.

Please feel free to contact me if you have specific questions.

Glad tidings to all during this holiday season. We look forward to working with you in 2007!

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December, 2006

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## Hot off the presses

Each year, DVR gathers success stories and proudly shares the accomplishments of customers, staff and partners with an annual report in a handy calendar format. We greatly appreciate the contributions of stories by staff and know you'll enjoy this year's report. Copies will be distributed statewide this month. If you would like additional copies to share with local employers, partners or colleagues, please contact Kelly Boston (by email at [bostok@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:bostok@dshs.wa.gov) or phone at (360) 725-3613.)

In addition, the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is now also distributing their Annual Report. To request a copy please contact SRC member Tony Tran (by email at [trantot@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:trantot@dshs.wa.gov) or phone at (206) 273-7117) or SRC Executive Director Joelle Brouner (by email at [brounjm@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:brounjm@dshs.wa.gov) or by phone at (360) 725-3690.)

Both reports make great reading! Our sincere thanks to staff, SRC members and partners for their roles in making this past year a success for our customers.

## Performance Progress through November

We continue to make positive progress! We have now successfully rehabilitated 297 individuals so far this federal fiscal year. For the month of November, we achieved a 55.6% rehabilitation rate. We released 1000 names from the waiting list and plan to continue releases at this level at least through February 2007. Our client services expenditures were at the level we anticipated. These are good indicators for a successful year. Thank you for your work and demonstration of good rehabilitation practices.

Our goals for this federal year are to continue to reduce the waiting list, achieve at least 2500 successful employment outcomes and a rehabilitation rate of 60%. We have the skills to do this!

## RSA update

The U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) has now posted each state VR program's Annual Review Report for Federal Fiscal Year 2005 (October 1, 2004 – September 30, 2005). The reports provide important information about the performance of the public vocational rehabilitation programs.

You can access Washington's Annual Review Report from our website at: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/dvr/events/what'snew.htm> and click on **RSA reports are available.**

## **Independent Living Services Workgroup**

For the past several years, DVR has been purchasing independent living services from individual consultants, organizations and Centers for Independent Living. We recognize that the provision of independent living services can mean the difference in terms of more successful employment plans and better outcomes for some of our customers. We have, however, lacked consistency in the way we have utilized this important resource.

We have convened a workgroup of staff and partners to assist us in identifying how to more effectively utilize independent living services. Our goal is to develop and implement an independent living services contract by next Fall.

Thanks to the following individuals for serving on this important workgroup. DVR Core Team: Brian Clark, Art Garza, Lee Ruddy and Vicki Sprague. Extended Core Team: Jennifer Bean (Area 2), Shon Copeland (Area 3), Kathy Richards (Area 1), Rob Honan (SILC Executive Director), Charley Lane (disAbility Resource Connection), Sam Ankney (Peopleworks Inc.), Ben Martin and Dianna Vaughn (Service Alternatives), Kim Rinehardt (sole proprietor).

## **Ticket to Work Reminder**

You can help DVR increase our available resources. Please read on!

Under the Ticket program, DVR receives reimbursement from the Social Security Administration for the cost of VR services for individuals receiving SSI/SSDI who are closed successfully and earn at or above substantial gainful activity (SGA) for nine months. In 2006, DVR received \$1.4 million in reimbursements for these cases. The additional funding went into case service allotments and enabled us to serve more people from the waiting list.

We could increase reimbursements and bring even more funds into Washington by encouraging customers to assign their tickets to DVR. When signing the IPE, print out a 1365, have the customer sign it, and fax it to Sandie Long at State Office. If an individual chooses not to

sign a 1365, fax the front page and signature page of the IPE to Sandie Long with a note that the customer is not signing a 1365.

If you have any questions about this, please contact Abby Cooper, DVR's Ticket to Work Program Manager.

## **Final thoughts**

With the holidays now upon us, it seems like the pace of our everyday lives picks up momentum. Please take a few minutes to pause and take a breath. Reflect upon the good work that we do and the positive impact we have in the lives of the people we serve.

Here's wishing you the very best during the holiday season!

Thank you –  
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